

The Utah Upland Game Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

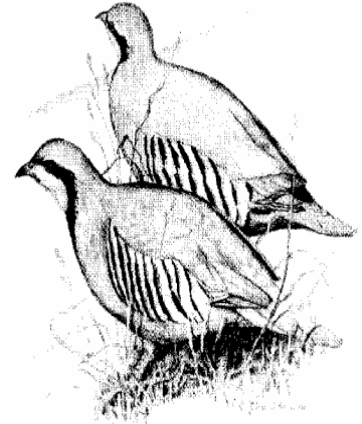
March 23, 2004

Opening

A meeting of the Utah Upland Game Advisory Committee was held on this date.

Present:

Kelly B. Andersen
Todd Ballantyne
Don Gaskill
Jim Gaskill
Dean Mitchell (DWR Upland Game Program Coordinator)
Ernie Perkins
Tony Perkins (Secretary)
Dan Potts
Travis Proctor
Hal Smith
Ryan Sorensen
John Staley (Chair)



Old Business

Trapping and Transplanting

Trapping of California Quail is winding down. Approx. 350 birds have been trapped along the Wasatch Front and scattered statewide. The birds were trapped from situations where they were being a depredation problem.

Turkeys are also being transplanted; over 700 Rio Grandes have been brought in from out-of-state over the winter, along with 482 birds which have been transplanted within the state (both Merriam's and Rio Grandes). The appropriate Rio Grande sites within the state are basically all planted now and the state will probably not be getting any more of them from out-of-state. However, there will probably be some more Merriam's brought in. The state may be done importing birds within the next few years, depending on how the populations do.

Sage Grouse

A new federal lawsuit has been filed by several conservation groups asking the Fish and Wildlife Service to list the Gunnison sage grouse as an endangered species. The Gunnison sage grouse has been on the candidate list since the year 2000 and may move to a higher ranking on that list in response to this lawsuit.

The new lawsuit cites the threat of West Nile virus as an additional reason that the birds need protection.

Walk-In Access

The DWR is figuring out the cost of the pilot program and hopes to have a WIA coordinator hired around July 1st. The plan is to start soliciting landowners to join the program around the 1st of January.

Some good news on the funding issues, the \$70,000 that DWR was committed to spend each year on predator control has been freed up. The money has been earmarked for the WIA program for the next three years instead, after that it reverts to the DWR's discretion where to spend the money.

New Business

Doves and Pigeons

There were some white-wing and Inca doves taken in Southern Utah last season. Since it is difficult for the average hunter to distinguish mourning doves (a legal game species) from these other breeds, the DWR plans to offer an aggregate limit in 2004 and make it legal to take these other species as well. This is dependant on approval from the Fish & Wildlife Service.

A pilot banding program for band-tailed pigeons is starting in Idaho, Arizona and Washington. Thousands of birds are going to be banded. Hunters which harvest a banded bird should use the contact information on the band to get in touch with the study organizers.

Dog Training

The regulations pertaining to dog training are up for renewal and will go before the RACs and the Wildlife Board, starting July 26th.

New Guzzlers

The Habitat Council has approved a plan to install 4 new guzzlers in the state. Approval from the BLM is still required before construction can begin.

Pheasants Forever State Council Meeting

Pheasants Forever is going to hold its State Council Meeting on April 10th. One of the agenda items is an attempt to get a habitat specialist hired in Utah to help utilize federal habitat money. This person will not just concentrate on pheasants, but will look to improve habitat for all game species.

Youth Chukar Hunt

The Utah Chukar Foundation brought up the idea of holding a Youth Chukar Hunt, similar to the Pheasant hunts currently held statewide. After discussion about the possibilities, including setting aside one area in the state for youth hunters one week prior to the start of the regular season, it was decided to put off trying to figure out the details for now. It is planned that a proposal will be developed around the beginning of next year.

Willard Bay

The Willard Bay dog training area is really getting hammered. Opening the North side of the area to training, along with the South side was discussed but it was noted that the Northern Region is very protective of that area. It was agreed that we would ask the Northern Region about getting some more year-round training areas.

Election of New Officers

Elections were held and our new officers were unanimously elected. Congratulations to Jim Gaskill, our new chairman, and Ryan Sorensen, the new secretary.

Upland Game on the Internet

You can get more Utah upland game information at <http://www.wildlife.utah.gov/uplandgame/> including the past minutes for this committee, news, proclamations, and information about upcoming public meetings.

Agenda for Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 27th at 6:00 P.M. at the DWR State offices at 1594 West North Temple, Salt Lake City.

Topics will be:

- Quail Trapping Report
- Dog Training Rules Feedback
- Pheasants Forever State Council Meeting Report
- Sharptail Grouse Count Preliminary Report

Everyone is invited to attend these meetings; it's an opportunity for you to get any issues you know about onto the table.

Let us know of donations, projects, etc., made by your group – we want to publicize good activities!

If you know of other interested parties who should get copies of the minutes, and who are involved in upland game organizations or programs, please get us their name. If you want to make an electronic mail input, please send it to one of the following:

Dean Mitchell deanmitchell@utah.gov
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Hal Smith hmsmith@allwest.net

Ryan Sorensen

Jim Gaskill

jhgaskill@weber.edu

Respectfully submitted ...

Tony Perkins